

Preventing Underage Drinking... Pricelless



**NOT hosting the party;
staying out of jail —**

+Damages From Civil Lawsuit \$8,694,162.00

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Total | \$765.00 |
| Food | \$75.00 |
| DJ | \$500.00 |
| Alcohol for Underage Drinkers | \$190.00 |

BUDGET FOR PARTY

If you are concerned about someone who may have a problem with alcohol or other drugs, please call for information or treatment options.

Massachusetts Substance Abuse
Information and Education Helpline
1-800-327-5050 (TTY 1-800-439-2370)
www.helpline-online.com

For more information on the prevention of alcohol and other drug use, go to:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
www.mass.gov/dph/bsas
www.mass.gov/dph/parentpower

or, for more copies of this brochure and detailed guides,
visit www.mass.gov/maclearinghouse or
call 1-800-952-6637 (TTY 1-617-536-5872)

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**Massachusetts Department of Elementary
and Secondary Education**
www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/safety.html

**Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Bureau of Substance Abuse Services**
www.mass.gov/dph/bsas

**Massachusetts Executive Office of
Public Safety and Security**
www.mass.gov/eopss

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Action Plan for Parents

- > Talk with your children about alcohol. Tell them what will happen if they break your rules about alcohol or other drugs.
- > Have an ongoing discussion about the risks involved.
- > Be involved. Know who, what, where and when.
- > Ask other parents if they have the same rules you have.
- > Create a plan with your children about what to do in a risky situation. Texting, calling or going to a safe location are all good ideas.

**Safe, healthy,
alcohol-free children...
PRICELESS**

It's the Law

The law in Massachusetts is clear:
Whoever **furnishes*** alcohol to a person under 21 years of age shall be punished by:



* “FURNISH” shall mean to knowingly or intentionally Supply, Give, Provide to, or Allow to possess alcoholic beverages on premises or property owned or controlled by the person charged. M.G.L. c. 138, s. 34

Questions & Answers about the Social Host Law

A SOCIAL HOST IS ANYONE (adult or minor) who is in control of the premises and who furnishes alcohol or allows it to be consumed on those premises.

Am I breaking the law if I allow my child’s underage guests to consume alcohol in my home?

Yes. The legal drinking age in Massachusetts is 21. It is against the law to serve or provide alcohol to underage guests or to allow them to drink alcohol in your home or on other property you control. If you do, you may be prosecuted criminally. The penalty is a fine of up to \$2,000, imprisonment for up to a year, or both. M.G.L. c. 138, s. 34

Can I be sued if my child or an underage guest at my home drinks alcohol and injures someone?

Yes. You may be financially responsible if your child or underage guest injures another person (or himself) after having consumed alcohol, if you controlled the supply of the alcohol, made it available, or served it. Civil judgments can be for millions of dollars.

What if my child allows underage guests to drink or possess alcohol at my home or other property I control?

You or your child may be charged criminally. For you to be found guilty under the Social Host Law, the Commonwealth must prove that you or your child knowingly or intentionally supplied, gave, provided, or allowed minors to possess alcohol at your home or other property you controlled. You or your child may also be sued civilly.

Does the Social Host Law apply if I rent a hotel room for my daughter’s party?

Yes, since you control the hotel room, the Social Host Law applies. M.G.L. c. 138, s. 34

Will my homeowner’s policy cover the costs of litigation and any judgment against me or my child?

You may or may not be covered, especially if the underage drinker causes injury or death by use of an automobile. Many insurance policies do not cover situations where criminal conduct is involved.

Alcohol and Your Child’s Future

A criminal or juvenile record can prevent a person from getting a job or joining the military. Making bad decisions about alcohol can jeopardize involvement in school activities, sports, or clubs; college admissions; and financial aid.

Alcohol and the Brain

Your child’s brain continues to develop into their mid-twenties.

Drinking alcohol during adolescence damages parts of the brain responsible for:

- > Decision-making
- > Self-control
- > Memory and Learning

Parents are the most important influence in their children’s lives.

- > As a parent, the things you say and do have tremendous influence on the decisions your child makes—especially when it comes to using alcohol and other drugs.
- > Teens whose parents set rules about alcohol are less likely to drink.
- > By talking with your children about not using alcohol and other drugs, you can help them make better choices and live safer, healthier lives.